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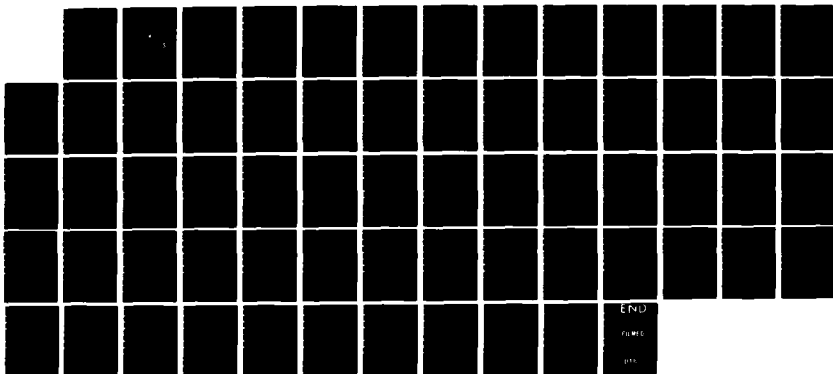
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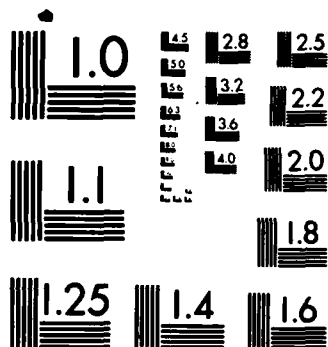
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## Monterey, California



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THE ROAD FROM LAPALMA:  
ANALYSIS OF THE POTENTIAL FOR A  
NEGOTIATED SOLUTION IN EL SALVADOR

by

James L. Brubaker

September 1985

Thesis Advisor:

M. Clough

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Analysis of the Potential for a  
Negotiated Solution in El Salvador

by

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Lieutenant, United States Navy  
B.S., University of Maryland, 1976

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

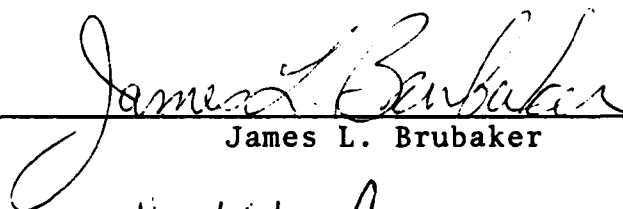
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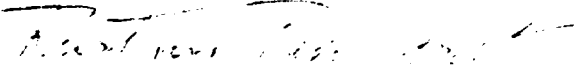
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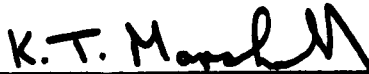
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## ABSTRACT

The crisis in El Salvador has evolved through several distinct bargaining phases. Each phase has involved the interaction/conflict between various political power contenders, resulting in a reassessment of relative positions and a new phase. This has led to the present condition in which the major actors are realizing that the need for limited concessions and a peaceful settlement outweigh the potential gains and costs of continued conflict. This thesis is a study of the historical and cultural bases of bargaining powers in El Salvador, and how they have been utilized and transformed within each socio-political power faction in reaching the present situation, and what it portends for the future.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Speaking before the general assembly of the United Nations on 8 October 1984, President Jose Napoleon Duarte, of El Salvador, made the remarkable gesture of proposing direct dialogue between his government and insurgent forces. This proposal was the most significant public action in moving toward a settlement of the civil war that has raged in the country for over 5 years. Even though the talks at La Palma that resulted from this announcement produced no agreements of substance, the underlying factors involved were of considerable significance.

The fact that Duarte was able to make the announcement as well as carry out the proposal indicates a notable shift in perceptions and positions of powerful factions involved. In a country that has historically been governed by military rulers controlled by a conservative oligarchy, this type of maneuver has never been allowed. Duarte's predecessor, Alvaro Magana, the year before was faced with a string of highly publicized death squad killings as a response to just such an attempt.<sup>1</sup> Conservative business and political groups as well as the military had consistently opposed negotiations with the rebels. It was considered to be a "trap" which would provide the insurgents an opportunity to gain strength through an increased public image as well as time to plan and organize further attacks.

President Duarte in his campaign for election had sought popular support by promising to pursue talks with the rebels. However, after being elected, he seemed to be going back on his word by stating the conditions were not right

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<sup>1</sup>New York Times, 9 October, 1984.

for a meeting. An aide explained that "the government cannot move toward negotiations with the leftists before there is a consensus on that course within the army and on the right".<sup>2</sup> The sudden initiation of direct talks, surprising even his supporters, was said to have received the support of the army high command and conservative political leaders.<sup>3</sup> Attendance at the talks by Defense Minister Vides Cassanova tends to confirm this fact.

In addition to peace talks, Duarte campaigned on promises of social and economic reform: land redistribution; judicial reform; human rights. All familiar ideals that had been voiced by leaders before, only to be squelched by the Salvadoran reality of conservative obstructionism. The most recent example was the junta formed after the Major's Coup of 1979, whose failure to produce promised reforms has been attributed with responsibility for driving the moderate left into coalition with radical groups.<sup>4</sup>

This political left has removed itself from the legitimate political system because of a total loss of faith in the system to provide necessary changes, believing that only through radical restructuring of institutions can reform be achieved. They view the Duarte administration as another facade of democracy, hiding the real military dictatorship, controlled by oligarchic interests.<sup>5</sup> Any reforms made are only token actions that do not alter the unjust system, exemplified by the demands of the FDR-FMLN in response to the proposed talks, that the military high

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<sup>2</sup>New York Times, 2 September, 1984.

<sup>3</sup>New York Times, 10 & 14 October, 1984

<sup>4</sup>LeoGrande, W. & Robbins, C. "Oligarchs and Officers; The Crisis in El Salvador;" Foreign Affairs, V 58, No. 5, pp. 1084-88.

<sup>5</sup>Ungo, Guillermo, "The People's Struggle;" Foreign Policy, No. 43, Summer 1981, pp. 51-63.

command be represented, as the army is the true wielder of government power.

Conversely, proponents of the administration can point out data that exemplify the advances made in reform: successful land redistribution; radical reduction in politically motivated deaths; and continuation of the democratic electoral process begun in 1982.<sup>6</sup> The most recent legislative elections in March especially favor Duarte's record; the nearly 53% of the popular vote given the Christian Democrats was a referendum on administration policies and progress. The question then arises, is there truly a transformation occurring in the political power capabilities of the different factions? Have the conservative forces been relegated to the minority opposition role, or is the reactive backlash primed and ready to strike down reform again? And what of the process initiated at La Palma, can it lead to deeper negotiations and an eventual resolution, or was it just a tactic in a strategy designed to gain international and popular support for the regime. It is within the framework of bargaining theory that the relative strengths and potentials of involved parties can best be analyzed and evaluated to answer these questions.

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<sup>6</sup>Report on the Situation in El Salvador, (Dec 84 - Jan 85), Department of State, Washington DC.

## II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A significant theme evident in early Salvadoran history, since the time Pedro de Alvarado conquered the region for himself and Spain in 1524, is the development of an exclusionary socio-political system, controlled by a selective group, utilizing a moral form of ideological justification for exploitation. The conquistadores did it for God, country and honor. Their attitude of wealth and strength of will equating to superiority was passed on to the wealthy elite who assumed control of the country upon independence. However, the higher ideals became subordinated to more personalist goals. The guiding principle became the capitalist ideals of freedom and democracy; the rights of private property, sanctity of a free, unregulated market, and the belief that the only government intervention allowable was in protection of the economy. If elections had to be rigged, or subversives repressed to guarantee successful democracy, then so be it, for they were the ones who were best able to judge and carry out such things. The military then carried on the tradition with their own interpretation of duty and honor; it was their duty to protect the country from all threats to its good order, and the sanctity of the military institution.

Following Mexico's example, El Salvador achieved independence from Spain in 1821 as a part of the captaincy-general of Guatemala. The ensuing years were filled with repeated attempts at Central American union, marked by conflicts between those favoring centralized government similar to Spanish administration, and those advocating a more anticlerical federalism. The latter group finally predominated in El Salvador, and formalized their

liberal principles in the constitution of 1886.<sup>7</sup> Although this constitution provided for presidential elections, violent ascension to the position continued to be the rule. This problem was resolved through cooperation between those in power. An informal system of imposition was agreed upon, wherein all appearances of open elections were maintained, except for one matter: the victor was always guaranteed, through deceit and coercion, to be the chosen candidate of the elite. Even with this facade of participatory government, the harsh repressive rule of the Melendez-Quinonez family dynasty from 1912-1927, could not be mistaken for anything other than dictatorships.

During this period, the economy of El Salvador was being engineered as an almost exclusively agricultural export system. This was because, around 1850, the volcanic slopes of the country were found to be ideal for coffee cultivation. The success of this capitalist venture proved so profitable that pressure developed to convert additional lands to its growth. Traditional communal lands that had been used to grow subsistence crops were expropriated and passed into the hands of the small elite minority. Coffee exports grew to become 86.9% of the total value of all exports (an increase greater than 1100%) from 1880 to 1914. The foreign exchange earned from these exports provided over half (58.7%) of the government revenue. The opposite effect was that by 1930, only 8.2% of those engaged in agriculture were proprietors.<sup>8</sup> By 1971, only 5.2% owned the minimum land required to support an average peasant family.<sup>9</sup> The seasonal

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<sup>7</sup>Langer, William L.; *An Encyclopedia of World History*, 5th Ed.; Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1970.

<sup>8</sup>Baloyra, Enrique A., *El Salvador in Transition*, University of North Carolina Press, 1982, p. 6.

<sup>9</sup>Jung, Harald; "Class Struggle and Civil War in El Salvador", in *El Salvador: Central America in the New Cold War*, Gettleman, Lucefield, Menashe, Mermlestein, Rudosh, eds., New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1981.

labor requirements of coffee, and the capital intensive nature of the second largest export, cotton (labor requirements of which were greatly reduced by technological advances), meant that a large and growing number of landless peasants were either under-employed or unemployed.

Suppression of labor mobilization was achieved up to this time by manipulation and intimidation. Local paramilitary groups (guardia) were maintained by the large landholders to protect their privileges. In 1917, the first alleged popular organization in the country was formed, the Red League. It purported to represent a socialist program for the peasants' benefit. In reality, it was an elite sponsored organization designed to disrupt popular collective action and control disorders. Several genuine popular organizations did manage to form in the twenties, such as the Regional Rederation of Salvadoran Workers (FRTS), and the more radical Salvadoran Communist Party (PCS), Red Aid International (SPI), and Anti-Imperialist League. By May 1930, organization had become so effective as to mass a demonstration of 80,000 workers in San Salvador in demand for minimum pay and guarantees. All of these groups had been largely organized and influenced by student militants from El Salvador and other regional countries. Many were avowed Marxists, all were inspired by the successful Mexican Revolution.<sup>10</sup>

The rapid degeneration of the economy, starting in 1928 with the fall in coffee prices, fell heaviest on the lower class, greatly increasing unrest. The president at the time, Pio Romero Bosque, had oscillated between minor labor concessions and repression of dissent. After his initial (s)election to the presidency by the Melendez-Quinonez clan,

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<sup>10</sup>Anderson, Thomas P., Matanza: El Salvador's Communist Revolt of 1932, University of Nebraska Press, 1971, pp. 22-30.

his first action had been to dissassociate himself from them, and move toward political reform. The surprising escalation in disorder this allowed compelled him to exert stricter measures. Then, at the end of his term, Romero Basque made an even greater break with tradition by opening the selection for his successor to truly free elections. Reflecting the high level of public politicization at the time, Arturo Araujo, the liberal elite candidate of the just formed Labor Party, was elected March 1931.

In what has become a very familiar theme in El Salvador, Araujo took office in a tense atmosphere of dissatisfaction, having to attempt to placate the opposite interests of the elite and peasants and appease the military, all against the additional challenges of economic depression and a growing militant left. The heightened expectations of popular classes, fomented by the radical organizations, demanded immediate change; the elite refused to cooperate with the new government; and Labor Party officials proved to be self serving and ineffectual in government posts. Finally, the threat of a socialist government and uncontrolled disorder, coupled with the fact their pay was several months in arrears, the army overthrew Araujo on 2 December 1931. General Maximiliano Martinez was installed as president.<sup>11</sup>

Martinez dealt with continued civil unrest with violent repression. Legislative elections held the following January proved the system to have reverted to the former practices of electioneering, and closed the door on any hopes for peaceful change. In response, the leading Salvadoran Communist, Farabundo Marti, planned and organized an armed revolt, intending to coordinate the frustrated rural peasants with the equally dissatisfied urban workers, students and soldiers. However, Marti was arrested and the

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<sup>11</sup>Baloyra, pp. 8-10

military conspirators revealed just days before the scheduled uprising. The PCS attempted to "call off" the revolution, but word did not reach or convince the rural western coffee growing region. An uncoordinated series of mob violence in several towns resulted, killing approximately 35 town officials. The rebels were easily put down by the military. Retribution by both officials and civilians was swift and brutal: an estimated 10,000 suspected insurgents were killed, many based on such arbitrary justifications as appearance.<sup>12</sup>

With the exception of one brief interim president, General Martinez served as president until 1944. Addressing the economic problems, Martinez established the Central Reserve Bank to control currency, decreed a moratorium on collection of debts and reduced interest rates to prevent farm foreclosures, established the Salvadoran Coffee Company as a source of credit and exporter, and restricted capitalization of manufacturing enterprises to protect local artisans. Although increasing government involvement in the economy somewhat, these measures actually served to protect and entrench the agri-export economy, and inhibit industrial development.<sup>13</sup>

After his regime managed to survive a coup attempt in April of 1944, a general strike one month later in San Salvador sponsored by frustrated bankers, entrepreneurs, commercial employees, students and professionals, forced Martinez to resign. General Andres Menendez was posted as interim president, and immediately proceeded to promote democratic initiatives: freedom of the press, labor organizations, and a call for free elections. Conservative

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<sup>12</sup>Anderson, Matanza, pp. 134-6

<sup>13</sup>Baloyra, pp. 12-13; and Webre, Stephen Jose Napoleon Duarte and the Christian Democratic Party in Salvadoran Politics, 1960-1972. Baton Rouge and London, Louisiana State University Press, 1979, pp. 10-11.



forces, however, were not prepared to allow this progression once again. Menendez was overthrown by a military coup in October.

Colonel Osmin Aguirre, former director of the national police and leading figure of the Matanza in 1932, was made the next president. The proposed elections were carried out, but once again the procedures had returned to close government control to guarantee the outcome. General Salvador Castaneda Castro was (s)elected. When the new president attempted to extend his term past that constitutionally allowed, he was in turn overthrown by the "majors coup" of 14 December 1948.

Self proclaimed as the revolution of the "military youth, the junta that was formed, incorporating military officers from the academy administration, and two civilian professionals, promised political democracy as well as social and economic reform. Elections held in 1950 installed Colonel Oscar Osorio, leading member of the junta and the official party candidate, as president.<sup>14</sup> The Constituent Assembly elected simultaneously drafted a social democratic constitution, increasing the responsibilities of the state. This regime continued the intent of the preceding Revolutionary Council (junta), by promoting industrial development and urban social reforms. For instance, a social security system was established, and urban labor was allowed to organize. No reforms of the rural agrarian structure were attempted, however.<sup>15</sup> Initiation of the socialist experiment in neighboring Guatemala encouraged Osorio to harden his policies to maintain control.

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<sup>14</sup>Osorio had stepped down from the junta just prior to the elections and formed the Revolutionary Party of Democratic Unification (PRUD).

<sup>15</sup>Webre, pp. 16-17

The election of 1956 saw Osorio's chosen successor, Jose Maria Lemus, elected with the help of government intervention. Several contending candidates, including two fellow officers, had been disqualified. Government influence over the media was pronounced. Conservatives were apprehensive over Lemus's socially liberal tendencies. Events in Cuba, inciting greater agitation in the universities, and falling world commodities prices forced the president to harden his policies. Just months before the scheduled elections in 1961, Lemus attempted to gain popular support through a series of reforms. These relatively innocuous reforms were again directed entirely toward urban improvements. The only mass support the administration was able to muster was by trucking cooperative peasants into the capital for a rally.

These actions were not enough to satisfy the aroused student and teacher groups. Increasing university demonstrations led to increased government arrests and violence. A state of seige was declared in September 1960. Never having enjoyed the complete confidence of all officers, the deteriorating situation convinced many that the president was losing control. On 26 October, Lemus was overthrown by a reformist military coup in attempt to address the underlying social problems. Inclusion of three civilian professionals with ties to the universities, and promises for free elections, led to increasing popular political activity and conservative apprehension. Two days after a congress composed of predominantly moderate to progressive political parties convened to rewrite the electoral laws, another coup replaced the governing junta. The new regime's rationale for acting was to quell the disturbances generated by the "junta having allowed

extremist forces to run wild in the country."<sup>16</sup> Although reactionary in its political control, the new Civilian-Military Directorate continued moving toward economic modernization. Economic diversity was promoted with aid from the Alliance For Progress. The Central Reserve Bank was nationalized for greater control over monetary policy.

The Directorate formed a new official party, National Conciliation Party (PCN), to support its programs and presidential candidate, Colonel Julio Adalberto Rivera. Legislative elections were immediately announced to be held two months later in December 1961. The poorly organized opposition parties were unprepared for the sudden announcement. The three most significant legal parties, Christian Democrats (PDC), Social Democrats (PSD), and the Renovating Action Party (PAR), joined together to form the Union of Democratic Parties (UPD) to attempt a united opposition front. The divergent interests of the parties, however, prevented any coordinated campaign. This, combined with the PCN's ability to utilize government resources and campaign on reforms of the Directorate, resulted in the PCN easily winning in the assembly. The newly elected legislature then re-enacted the constitution of 1950 with few changes. Presidential elections were scheduled for April 1962.

These elections were marred by the total distrust of the electoral process by virtually the entire country. No opposition parties entered a candidate. Rivera and his vice-president, who was related to the oligarchy by marriage and had close ties to the U.S. administration, were elected. After such an acrimonious beginning, Rivera was able to gain legitimacy by easing electoral statutes to allow opposition

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<sup>16</sup>Baloyra, pp. 40-42

parties to win significant gains. Favorable commodity prices and the success of the Central American Common Market in promoting industrial development in El Salvador, generated considerable optimism within the population. Rivera's commitment to anti-communism and gradual democratization within a capitalist framework, won United States approval and support. Liberalization of the political process provided the avenue for the middle class to express dissent and gain access to decision making. Improvements in the quality of life, such as housing and school projects, electrification, and minimum rural wages, appealed to the masses. By limiting such reforms to superficial measures which did not effect the social foundations or were easily obviated by the oligarchy, Rivera maintained a working relationship with the elite.

The legislative and mayoral elections of 1964 significantly restored confidence in the system and promoted the PDC to the dominant position fo opposition parties. In response to PDC demands, Rivera had changed the majority representation system for assembly elections, to one of proportional representation. As a result, The PDC won 14 seats. They also won 37 municipalities, including Jose Napoleon Duarte's election as mayor of San Salvador. With the exception of a few violations, the campaign and elections were free and open. The military was ordered to remain apolitical, and the government accepted the results. Channeling discontent and violence into peaceful electoral methods while still guarenteeing a non-socialist anti-communist (military) president, satisfied the great majority of officers.

The presidential election of 1967 was a test of Rivera's democratization. The PAR, the oldest party in existence at the time, having been formed in oppositon to Martinez in 1944, now consisted of liberal democratic elites and

professionals. The differing economic viewpoints of these two internal factions caused a split into the "old Guard" Popular Salvadoran Party (PPS), which advocated a return to laissez faire capitalism under civilian rule, and the lefitist faction continuing under the PAR banner, but espousing socialism, agrarian reform, and closer ties with Cuba. Even though the new PAR's candidate was not a serious threat to win, the PCN succeeded in centralizing attention during the campaign on the issue of Communist influence in the PAR. Other issues of substance were lost in the psychosis of the red threat. Fidel Sanchez, the PCN candidate, easisly won the election. The system had once again operated democratically - the PAR was not declared illegal until after the election.

President Sanchez Hernandez did not enjoy the positive growth and relative stability of Rivera. The commodity market suffered again, and rising deficits discouraged private inveatments. Popular unrest grew as unemployment and conditions worsened. Conservative elites were growing uneasy over the continuing gains of the PDC in the legislature and departments, having won 19 seats and 78 mayoralities in the 1968 elections. Conflict with Honduras, at first causing greater dissent, proved to be the administration's salvation, albeit temporary. After several border incidents, increasing reports of Honduran mistreatment of Salvadoran emigres, and rising nationalist emotions, the country became united in support of invasion of Honduras on 14 July 1969. The oppostion parties, led by Duarte, joined with the government to form the National Unity Front in support of national dignity and human rights.

The short four day war incurred relatively light damages. The real losses to El Salvador were; the highly favorable trade with Honduras (\$23 million in 1968), land access to Costa Rica and Nicaragua, and the closing of the

Honduran border to excess Salvadoran rural labor. The return of thousands of refugee peasants to an already over crowded, land controlled country posed an immediate problem to the government. For the first time, the issue of agrarian reform became a seriously considered and openly debated matter. The legislative assembly organized a National Agrarian Reform Congress that invited all sectors of society to participate. This congress reached consensus on a series of significant resolutions: the large and medium agri-business farms were the root of social problems; it was the duty of the state to expropriate lands to remedy root social ills; peasant and rural labor must be allowed to organize to guarantee the success of reform.<sup>17</sup>

Able to ride the wave of nationalism still cresting from the war, the PCN managed to dominate the 1970 elections. For the presidential elections of 1972, however, the regime was forced to revert to more time tested methods to ensure continued control of the system. Three opposition parties joined together to form the National Opposing Union (UNO) to confront the PCN. These parties were the PDC, The National Revolutionary Movement (MNR), and the Democratic National Union (UDN). The MNR was founded in 1965 by Guillermo Manuel Ungo, son of one of the PDC founders. They were proponents of a "highly intellectualized democratic socialism whose adherents valued ideological purity over broad political appeal."<sup>18</sup> The UDN was a left splinter of the official party, composed of dissatisfied liberal elites and young officers. There were alleged ties with the outlawed PCS. The PPS was now the representative party for industrialists and commercial interests. With increasing threats of government supported land reforms, discontented

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<sup>17</sup>Webre, pp. 120-129.

<sup>18</sup>Webre, pp. 102.

landowners sought more suitable representation. They turned to the United Independent Democratic Front, and its originator and candidate General Jose Alberto "Chele" Medrano. Medrano was the founder of rural peasant paramilitary Nationalist Democratic organization (ORDEN), hero of the Honduran war, and avowed Communist hater.

The course of events during elections and immediately following, destroyed any semblance of an open democratic system. When the early lead enjoyed by the PCN began to fade with the tabulation of urban districts, traditional PDC and leftist party strongholds, the government terminated reports of returns. The following day, official results declared the PCN candidate, Arturo Armando Molina, the winner. Conditions deteriorated rapidly: political violence took a sudden upturn; radical leftists initiated a series of terrorist attacks; and, the UNO was organizing mass protests over the election. Legislative elections held the following March confirmed the determination of the regime to maintain control. The UNO slate in San Salvador, their strongest area, was disqualified. The party therefore conducted a campaign to invalidate the voting there by instructing supporters to cast null votes. (If a majority of votes are nullified by defacing or casting blank ballots, then the district vote is voided and must be re-conducted). After the success of this tactic was overruled by the government controlled Central Electoral Council (CCE), civil unrest reached new levels. Two days later, a military coup was attempted in the capital.

The leaders of the coup were not politically supported and were relatively unknown. However, after half a day of fighting, an UNO leader and Duarte both made radio announcements advocating popular support for the rebellion. The army rebels were outnumbered and outgunned by loyalist forces, though, and by late afternoon the uprising had been

defeated. President Sanchez announced his intentions of executing the leaders, including Duarte who had been captured in the Venezuelan First Secretary's home. After considerable diplomatic pressure, Duarte was flown into exile. Whether he had been a leader of the revolt or not, which is highly unlikely, is immaterial. What was important was that the political liberalism initiated by Rivera had succeeded in arousing a large sector of the population. The events of 1972-73 removed the more productive and less violent electoral option. The moderate centrists and leftists were left searching for other avenues of expression.

The remainder of the seventies saw the growth of social organizations in the form of student, peasant and worker groups resorting to civil disobedience. Formerly conservative religious leaders became more militantly vocal in denouncing government repression and social conditions. The more radical leftists resorted to increased terrorist tactics, and found growing support. Conservatives reacted by hardening the defense of their interests through political suasion of government, and direct attacks on representative examples of those responsible for the destabilization. Government response was to attempt to control the situation and instill order by breaking up demonstrations, closing the National university, and making sweeping arrests of subversives. To the dismay of conservatives, Molina also attempted to continue the PCN programs of gradual social reform. Particularly infuriating was the nationalization of the railroad, raising minimum wages, and passage of an agrarian reform program.

The fate of Molina's agrarian transformation signaled the trend in the regime. This program had created the Salvadoran Institute of Agrarian Transformation (ISTA) to administer the expropriation of unproductive lands for



peasant control. The fierce resistance put up by landowners was successful in forcing Molina to compromise his efforts and render the program ineffectual. This process was followed by the election of General Carlos Humberto Romero as president in 1977. Romero was known for his disdain for land reform and his hardline methods for dealing with dissent. The blatantly rigged elections led to mass demonstrations by UNO supporters in San Salvador. In response, Molina ordered the army to disperse the protestors; over twenty deaths resulted. Romero justified the action by saying:

When we saw that the country could fall into social and economic chaos, we decided to move against the subversives, but we did so always respecting the principle of human rights.<sup>19</sup>

Molina the weak before had rejected all U.S. military aid in response to the Carter administration's human rights stand.

Increasing violence further radicalized both ends of the extremes, and brought the situation to international attention. Paramilitary groups, such as the FALANGE and White Warriors Union (UGB), promised to exterminate all Communists and their allies. After the kidnap and murder of a prestigious member of the oligarchy, Mauricio Borgonovo, by a guerrilla group, the UGB threatened to kill all Jesuit priests in El Salvador, whom they blamed for instilling Marxist-Leninist teachings in the otherwise passive peasantry. Direct pressure from the U.S. resulted in Romero guaranteeing protection of the priests, and allowing international groups to investigate human rights conditions. The Romero government became known as "one of the world's worst violators of human rights."<sup>20</sup> However, kidnappings,

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<sup>19</sup>New York Times, 20 March, 1977

<sup>20</sup>Baloyra, p. 65.

bombings and attacks by the radical left and the reactionary responses from the "death squads", continued to increase.

Shortly after the Nicaraguan revolution, Romero attempted to moderate popular tensions by promising free elections the following year. Previously he had attempted to quell unrest by lifting his Public Order Law, enacted a year earlier to officially repress dissent, and organize a national forum for dialogue to conduct open discussions on the problems. All three measures were inadequate for the situation, and held no confidence in any sector. The regime's legitimacy was eroded. On 15 October 1979, Romero was overthrown by a military coup led by junior reformist officers. The newly formed junta promised to establish law and order, secure human rights, and develop a democratic system to carry out social and economic reforms to provide more equitable distributions. The junta was composed of two officers (Colonels Arnoldo Majano and Abdul Gutierrez), and three civilians (Ungo, Roman Mayorga, president of Central American University, and Mario Antonio Andino, an industrialist).

Immediate attempts were made to institute programs to achieve the stated goals. ORDEN was decreed illegal, and a special investigative commission was organized to determine the status of the many missing political prisoners. All landholdings over 247 acres were frozen until new statutes could be made. Control of the export trade was nationalized under the National Institute of Coffee (INCAFE). Effective implementation of these measures proved to be no easier than those in the past. Control of security forces, let alone paramilitary "private" armies, was not in the hands of the moderate junta. Violent repression of dissent continued. Progress in determining the cases of disappeared persons was hampered by obstruction and intimidation of the investigators. Out of frustration, the moderate civilians

in the government demanded the military commit itself to the professed goals of the "revolution" by relinquishing leadership to the junta, removing private sector representation from the government, and opening dialogue between the military, government and popular organizations. Unable or unwilling to meet these demands, led to the resignation of 22 members of government.

Duarte, having returned from exile and reassumed leadership in the PDC, announced the "willingness (of the PDC) to participate in the government, providing the leadership of the armed forces is restructured, dialogue with popular organizations is opened, and the private sector is excluded from the government."<sup>21</sup> A second junta was formed on 10 January, with PDC members Hector Dada, and Jose Antonio Morales Erhlich, and independent Dr. Jose Avalos joining the two military officers. Two of the three demands having been met with the private sector not being represented, and the need for dialogue with popular groups officially announced as part of the process of government transition.

The PDC was no more succesful in controlling the lawlessness. A large mass demonstration in San Salvador led by three of the largest popular organizations was fired upon by National Police, killing 24. One month later, Attorney General Mario Zamora was assassinated by right wing terrorists. The very next month, Archbishop Arnulfo Romero, the most respected supporter of peasant rights and critic of violence, was murdered while conducting mass. Then during his funeral, Army units fired on a crowd of 80,000 mourners. Hector Dada resigned from the junta, and was replaced by Duarte.

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<sup>21</sup>Miami Herald, 5 January, 1980.

Efforts for reform, though, continued: banks were nationalized to control lending practices; the ISTA was reconstituted to carry out newly decreed statutes for Agrarian reform. Predictably, these were met with obstructionist tactics by conservatives, but the resort to violent methods increased. Attacks were made on ISTA officials and intended peasant recipients. It was estimated that approximately 1600 persons were killed in the first four months of 1980, more than during the entire term of Romero.<sup>22</sup> Atrocities reached their nadir when six leaders of the newly formed Democratic Revolutionary Front, the political umbrella organization for leftist coordination, were abducted and killed, followed just two weeks later by the abduction and murder of three U.S. Maryknoll sisters and one layworker by National Guard troops.

During this period, there was a shift within the junta; Colonel Majano, original leader chosen by the "juventud militar", was first removed from military command, and then from the junta entirely. Duarte was then made president, with Col. Gutierrez as vice-president. This fourth junta managed to survive the guerilla's "Final Offensive" in early 1981, two attempted rightwing coups, and continued increasing political violence. It was announced at the end of 1981 that legislative elections would be held in March of 1982.

Under the close scrutiny of international observers and press corps, these elections were considered open and fair. Although the campaign had been marred by attempts violent intimidation, and the guerrillas utilized obstructionist tactics of their own to attempt to disrupt the process. There were six parties running tickets, however the choice was basically one between the PDC platform, and that of the

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<sup>22</sup>Miami Herald, 8 May, 1980.

newly formed, hardline anti-Communist, rightist Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA). The old line official party, the PCN, had lost considerable support in the polarization of the situation. The majority of leftist groups refused to participate, claiming the elections would be fraudulent and their participation would invite violent retribution. The final results were that the PDC received an overall majority of votes and seats (24). Faced with a preponderance of more conservative parties, however, the end result was that the right formed a coalition to maintain an effective voting majority.

Following this outcome, the assembly drafted a new constitution and installed Alvaro Magana as provisional president until elections could be held in 1984. ARENA deputies attempted to make good on campaign promises by rolling back reforms previously instituted, yet significantly, they were not entirely successful. Agrarian land redistribution was institutionalized in the constitution by a compromise program hammered out by an inter-party commission. The reactionary right's most effective tool continued to be violent intimidation.

Presidential elections were held 25 March 1984. Once again the choice lay between Duarte and the PDC's gradualist reform platform, and ARENA's candidate, Roberto D'Aubuisson, who promised a return to law and order and the golden years of the past. No candidate having received a majority in the first round, a runoff was held between the two leaders. Duarte came out the winner with 54% of the vote. Once again the elections were closely monitored; yet D'Aubuisson attempted to have the results annulled, charging fraud, but it was unsuccessful. It was just seven months later, on the anniversary of the 1979 coup, Duarte made his startling announcement at the U.N. to open talks with the rebel forces. Two years later in March 1984, against all

predictions, Duarte's PDC won a clear majority of seats in the legislature.

### III. INTERESTS, VALUES & PERCEPTIONS

The conflict in El Salvador has centered on access to and control of governmental decision making regarding social and economic policy and the distribution of rewards. The parties competing for these interests can be described as consisting of three general categories, each a distinctive Salvadoran definition: conservatives; progressives; and revolutionaries.<sup>23</sup> In describing the main participants, this categorization of society has a definite socio-economic deliniation. However, it must be said that each group has attracted a blend from each social strata in varying degrees.

#### A. VIEW FROM THE RIGHT

The first group is the conservative faction, whose fundamental make-up consists of two major value systems:

1. Traditionalists, whose values of the Hispanic, Catholic heritage instill a preference for rigid adherence to centralized authority. Church and government are interrelated, with the Church providing the moral justification for official policy, and government allowing full support and authority for the Church within its realm. Dissidants and nonconformers to the regime attack both church and state; the culprits are easily condemned as infidels. Retribution is swift and just.

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<sup>23</sup>Webre, Stephen. Jose Napoleon Duarte and the Christian Democratic Party in Salvadoran Politics, 1960-1972. Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1979. pp. x-xii

2. Liberals, so named for their belief in the classical laissez-faire doctrine of non-state intervention in the economy, and their professed democratic leanings with regard to freedom of speech, law and the separation of church and state. However, when this group's privileged interests are threatened by economic crises or attempted changes, the cry for protection of their "economic liberty" demands government action.

It has been the liberal beliefs which have predominated in the economic and political functionings in El Salvador. However, whenever the sacred order has been threatened, the hard line traditional response has been accepted as most effective to ensure control. The common bond that ties the conservatives together is their belief in the tenuous balance of social order which is constantly threatened by numerous internationalist agents. Social and economic reform is not only undesirable, but incompatible with stability. In realist terms, these students of social Darwinism believe in the right of the strong in exploiting the weak.

Formation of conservative interests and values has its deepest roots in the Spanish colonial heritage. Bequeathed with the legacy of the conquistador ambition to gain "spiritual freedom" through personal dominion, the early Salvadoran elite inherited the psychological attitude of superiority by virtue of wealth and power. The Spanish conquerors believed law was determined by the possessor of the greatest strength and will to command it.<sup>24</sup> Specific ideals emanating from this can be seen in the attraction of the traditionalists to centralized authority; the distinct

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<sup>24</sup>Vivas, Enrique; "Spanish Heritage", *Conflict and Violence in Latin American Politics*, Moreno & Mittrani, eds., (New York: Thomas Y. Cadwell Co., 1971), pp. 3-8.



class structure defined not along ethnic lines or even wealth, but a certain attitude; and, the immediate resort to violence to suppress disorder.

The small group of landed elite who secured control of the country following independence from Spain produced the legend of the "14 Families". This group comprised the early oligarchy which succeeded in manipulating market forces to gain greater economic and social prominence and, consequently, political power. In what has been described as the "magic square of oligarchic domination",<sup>25</sup> they were able to exercise complete control over agricultural production, land tenure, export, and finance. Having control of official government policy allowed them to increase concentration of lands through sanctioned expropriations of communal farm lands, (for the good of the "national" export economy), which deepened the subjugation of rural labor. Increasing numbers of landless peasants were no longer self sufficient but reliant on seasonal employment on the large estates (fincas). This large and growing rural labor force guaranteed minimal costs in terms of wages, as long as the campesinos could be kept from collective political activism.

Diversification of the wealthy elite into the finance and export sectors guaranteed control of all facets of the primary source of state revenue. Favorable tax legislation levied tariffs on imports which were paid for with foreign exchange earned by the export market. Exports were not taxed. Dependence on world commodity markets for revenue left little incentive for investing earnings in developing a domestic market. Those who needed manufactured goods (those with money) imported them. This ability to disregard

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<sup>25</sup>Baloyra, Enrique A. El Salvador in Transition. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1982, pp. 10-28

internal demands allowed the agribusiness economy to operate independent from and with little regard for social development.<sup>26</sup> Maintenance of the rigid class structure and economic conditions were justified as necessary for the continued prosperity of the country. Any changes to the operation of the agri-export sector, such as dangerous reforms, could upset the delicate balance of such a small country with a rapidly growing population. By "manipulating the ideological symbols that it monopolized",<sup>27</sup> sanctity of private property, free enterprise, and democracy, the oligarchy was able to inculcate the belief that economic survival of the nation was directly tied to survival of the exclusionary agricultural export system.

The post World War II industrialization and modernization period in El Salvador gave birth to a new faction within the conservative clan; the bourgeoisie. The "progressive" military presidential regimes, initiated in 1948, succeeded in promoting economic diversity from agriculture by developing industrial infrastructure needed to attract investment; for example, the port works built at Acajutla; the massive Lempa River hydroelectric project; and improvement in transportation. All of the instituted programs benefited urban commercial and industrial capitalists; those who had or could gain access to financing. It can be argued that concentration of manufacturing into the hands of few occurred, having emerged from a base of concentrated agricultural capital; required funding for the modernization programs had to come from the agri-export sector. It was necessary, therefore, for the emerging industrial sector to accept and promote a mutual

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<sup>26</sup>Torres-Rivas, Edelberto. "The Central American Model of Growth: Crisis for Whom?", in Revolution in Central America Stanford Central America Action Network, eds. Boulder: Westview Press, 1983.

<sup>27</sup>Baloyra, p. 21.

interest in protecting the established "coffee economy". Reform of the agribusiness structure was not attempted. As long as this sector of society held control of means of revenue and finance ("finance originating in the surplus generated by agricultural exports", and the eight largest banks linked either directly by ownership or through "official interests"),<sup>28</sup> the industrial/commercial interests were in a dependency and therefore secondary status.

International investment provided an avenue for the industrializing faction to gain economic freedom from the agricultural oligarchy, and consequently more political influence. The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America initiated the process by designing a regional integration scheme to increase internal markets throughout Central America: the Central American Common Market. With financing from the U.N., U.S., and the Inter-American Development Bank, projects were completed in each of the region's countries to promote industrial development. Manufacturing's contribution to the gross domestic product rose 30% in El Salvador during the 1960s.<sup>29</sup> This shifting internal balance of power is best seen in the vehicles and methods used to promote conservative interests.

Articulation of conservative interests has been predominantly conducted through agricultural and business associations. Two of the most notable examples of these have been the National Association of Private Enterprise (ANEP), and Eastern Region Agrarian Front (FARO). ANEP became the most influential interest group of the 1970's by combining various organizations of both business and

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<sup>28</sup>ibid., p. 29.

<sup>29</sup>Wynia, Gary. "Setting the Stage for Rebellion: Economics and Politics in Central America's Past", in Rift and Revolution: the Central American Imbroglio. Howard J. Wiarda, Ed. Washington and London: American Enterprise Institute for Public Research

agriculture; the cafeteleros (coffee producers), and other agricultural associations, and Chambers of Commerce. Its policy and procedures reflected a compromise between the traditional and liberal camps, as well as between the agriculture and industry factions inevitable within such an heterogeneous socio-economic group. The internal balance of power between the agricultural and industrial interests took a definite shift toward the modernizing side from the late 70's on. In the 1976 reaction to President Molina's attempted Agrarian Transformation, Anep was an outspoken critic and leader of public demonstrations to block the program. ((REF NYT)) The focal interest point rallied around was the protection of private sector freedom; land reform represented blatant government intervention in the market and a violation of the rights of private property. The basic tactic employed was a massive public campaign through the media (predominantly controlled by conservatives), and rallies to discredit the government programs as inefficient and counter productive, and to promote those of private enterprise as the traditional system that has been so successful.

In May 1980, ANEP joined the newly formed Productive Alliance (AP), which incorporated several more entrepreneurial business associations. (Salvadoran Industrialists' Association (ASI), National Federation of Small Enterprises (FENAPES), Society of Salvadoran Merchants & Industrialists, and the Union of Salvadoran Entrepreneurial Leaders (UDES), for example). These groups banded together in protest of the second junta's refusal to include private sector representatives in the government, one of the demands the Christian Democrats made prior to their agreeing to join the junta. ((MH 5JAN80; Bal p144)) The AP basically continued ANEP's program, however, the controlling interests became those in industry and commerce. Their greatest fear

of government reform in agriculture spilling over into nationalization of banks and exports having been realized, their attitude became even more obstructionist.

FARO Was organized during the 1976 agrarian crisis by the traditional planters and cattlemen. The most logical reason for their need to form a separate association was that they were not satisfied with the influence they had in ANEP. FARO tactics combined the public arousal methods in conjunction with ANEP, but they also took obstruction one step further by focusing on the cane-roots level. Landowners were instructed on tactics to delay property seizures through intimidation and violence. Workers were threatened with unemployment for complicity, and owners vowed to fight rather than turn over their land. The Salvadoran Communal Union (UCS), a rural peasant organization promoting land reform, was convinced not to support the program. As one UCS official put it, "We no longer believe in the land reform legislation."<sup>30</sup>

Electorally, the majority of conservatives had been satisfied with exerting influence on the military's choice of candidates for the official party, National Conciliation Party (PCN). Fringe parties were occasionally formed promoting candidates representing specific interests, such as the traditional conservative United Independent Democratic Front of General Jose Alberto Medrano, of 1972. The business interests were attracted to the official party because it provided the modernizing approach which benefited industry, without threatening more radical reforms which would entail government intervention. With the intense polarization of the junta years, the official party lost support of many conservatives, agricultural and business. The military's acceptance of land redistribution and

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<sup>30</sup> Miami Herald, 12 November, 1977.

nationalization of private enterprises drew strong support to the National Republican Alliance (ARENA), formed in 1981 in anticipation of constituent assembly elections. Roberto D'Aubuisson was chosen leader of the party. D'Aubuisson was a former major, dismissed after the 1979 coup, known to have conspired to overthrow the government in 1980 and 1981, strongly suspected of complicity in the murder of Archbishop Romero with direct links to death squads.<sup>31</sup> ARENA's platform was honest and direct: reforms made in the past two years by the junta have brought the economy down, and should therefor be rolled back; Christian Democratic policies of reform are equivilent to Communism, (always supported by his watermelon allegory: green on the outside (PDC color) and red on the inside); the guerilla war can be ended in three months by exterminating the rebels.

#### B. REVOLUTIONARIES

Diametrically opposed to the conservatives ore those who believe reform of the existing system is vital and can only be accomplished through the radical alteration of present power structures. Leaders of this group in El Salvador emerged from middle class student political discussion groups ascribing to Marxist-Leninist principles. Although outlawed since 1932, the Salvadoran Communist Party (PCS) has continued in existence since the 1920s. After the devastation of the Matanza, party strategy had been to organize labor unions and work through the system by forming coalitions with reformist groups in order to acheive socialist gains.

In 1970, the more militant party members, led by the secretary general, Salvador Cayetano Carpio, split from the PCS to form the armed guerrilla group Popular Forces of

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<sup>31</sup>New York Times, 16 February, 1982.

Liberation (FPL). FPL strategy was for a prolonged "people's war, based on the foco theory of Che Guevara. Adherence to this strategy caused two significant episodes of internal dissension. The more recent, in late 1982, culminated in the assassination of the leading opponent of the strategy, ordered by Cayetano Carpio, who shortly afterward committed suicide.

The first internal disagreement over strategy led to the formation of the Peoples Revolutionary Army (ERP). Composed of radical Christian Democrats and "Maoist university students",<sup>32</sup> who objected to the inadequacy of the foco theory. An apparent inability to formulate a consistent strategy or ideology within the ERP led to another split, which was directly precipitated by the assassination of the most notable proponent of political struggle over military, Roque Dalton. The militarist types, led by Ernesto Jovel, formed the Armed Forces of National Resistance (FARN).

The failure of the first junta in 1980 was the final blow to the PCS's attempts at bridge building with centrist groups. They joined the armed struggle by forming the Armed Forces of Liberation (FAL). The only guerrilla group smaller than the FAL is the Revolutionary Party of Central American Workers (PRTC). The greater strength of both of these groups lies in organization of dissatisfied workers rather than warfare. As such, they have tended to favor negotiations more than the other groups.<sup>33</sup>

All of these guerrilla organizations were born in the tremendous frustrations of the young idealistic middle class, concentrated in the cities. Unlike the original student activists, Farabundo Marti and his associates, these

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<sup>32</sup>New York Times, 18 March, 1982.

<sup>33</sup>ibid.

groups in the early 1970s concentrated on the urban masses. Their tactics were comprised of terrorist attacks directed toward destabilizing the government and its security forces. The FPL became known as the "pisteleros" (gunmen), for their attacks on police posts, the ERP was called the "bomberos" (bombers) for their bombings of official buildings, and the FARN was referred to as "pisteros" (money-chasers) for their kidnappings for ransoms. The immediate result of these acts, other than filling the FARN's warchest with approximately \$30 million, was to increase government repression and reactionary violence.

Similar to the Communist efforts of the 20s, Jesuit priests began mobilizing the rural peasants through their desired goal of raising the consciousness of the campesinos toward their right for a better life.<sup>34</sup> Ministering the "theology of liberation", the reoriented Catholic Church emphasized salvation through the elimination of hunger, poverty, and despair. The approximation of goals between the liberal clerics and Salvadoran Marxists of demanding restitution to the poor by placing the means of production in their hands, provided an avenue for cooperation between the devout Catholic peasants and the guerrillas. It also provided the rationalization for reactionary repression of both the church and peasants.<sup>35</sup>

One of the first popular organization to surface was a direct result of this religious awakening; the Salvadoran Christian Peasants Federation (FECCAS) was formed in the early 1960s. Organized by the Christian Democrats and the Catholic Church, it was dedicated to promoting and protecting peasant rights. Following the blatant electoral fraud of 1972 and the violent suppression of protest, FECCAS

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<sup>34</sup>New York Times, 27 August, 1975.

<sup>35</sup>Anderson, Thomas. "Roots of Revolution" in Rift and Revolution



joined with several trade unions, teachers and student organizations to form the more militant Unified Popular Action Front (FAPU). The combined strategy was to form a broad political front composed of democratic and reformist groups from all sectors to pressure the regime into providing economic and political liberties through both parliamentary and extra-parliamentary tactics.

FECCAS became even more radicalized and split from FAPU in 1975 to join a similar rural peasant group, Rural Workers Union (UTC), and other more radical urban trade unions and teachers and student organizations in forming the Popular Revolutionary Bloc (BRP). Publicly committed to a Marxist-Leninist philosophy, the BRP's stated goal is to establish a socialist revolutionary government under proletarian leadership.<sup>36</sup> Their tactics of strikes and demonstrations are directed toward increasing wages, lowering rents, land reform, and better urban working conditions. Occupations of buildings and embassies are designed to attract domestic and international attention to the situation in the country. As a bloc leader, Julio Flores, said,

We pick embassies where we expect collaboration and understanding...embassies of democratic or liberal regimes.<sup>37</sup>

Estimated at 60,000 active members, the BRP is the largest revolutionary organization in El Salvador. While supporting the guerrilla wholeheartedly, the bloc publicly disassociates itself from direct participation in the armed struggle as that is not their role.

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<sup>36</sup>Jung, Harald, "Class Struggle and Civil War in El Salvador", in El Salvador: Central America in the New Cold War, Gettleman, et al. New York: Grove Press Inc, 1981, p. 78.

<sup>37</sup>New York Times, 13 May, 1979.

A third popular revolutionary organization, the Popular League-28 February (LP-28), was formed in early 1978 in response to the massacre of student demonstrators following Romero's election, (the date for which the group is named). Its composition, ideology and strategy is similar to the BRP, but it is the smallest of the organizations. It has been suggested the LP-28 was formed by the ERP to perform as its political vehicle and to moderate leftist criticism of its militarist bent.<sup>38</sup>

The growth of popular organizations and their effective destabilization of the regime and the need of the guerrilla groups to expand their mass support led to the closer cooperation between certain organizations.

#### C. PROGRESSIVES: CENTER LANES OF THE POLITICAL HIGHWAY

Between the extremes of Conservative and Revolutionary exists the broad category of Progressives, encompassing moderates and centrists. Born out of the perception for the need for a non-Communist, reformist alternative, this group holds the common premise that change within the system is necessary for progress and can best be accomplished within a capitalist framework, aided by active state participation. The first appearance of such an interest was a result of the general disenchantment with the Martinez regime in 1944, growing social pressures, and the post-World War II wave of democratic economic development that swept the region. This was the modernizing faction within the military and private sector, whose primary objective was economic diversity and growth. They represented a new direction toward national thought rather than purely personalistic. As such, attempts at political modernization began as well, with the

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<sup>38</sup>Baloyra, p. 69.

institution of democratic electoral processes, opening up the system to wider participation.

Formation of the official party, PRUD, followed by the PCN, represented these interests in the political arena they had just created. It can be argued that this was an attempt to emulate the Mexican single party system.<sup>39</sup> However, the track record indicates it was more a return to the prior system of imposition, with the only difference being that the military were the source for the presidential succession. One definite fact made evident by the coup of 1961, and Molina's agrarian transformation crisis of 1976, was that, prior to 1979 the system would allow only so much political modernization.

The economic modernization produced the socio-politically progressive middle class. Industrial and commercial diversification after 1950 stimulated growth of urban professionals, and medium and small businesses, among others. This is relatively indicated in the growth of numbers of urban "decisive economic actors", which increased from 4000 to 24,000 from the thirties to the sixties,<sup>40</sup> and the number of non-agricultural, self-employed urbanites which grew from 246,000 to 361,000 in the latter sixties, early seventies.<sup>41</sup> This expanding middle class combined with widening political involvement led to the formation of parties based on social democratic ideals and middle class values. The most notable of these being the Christian Democrats (PDC), the National Revolutionary Movement (MNR), and the National Democratic Union (UDN).

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid., pp. 18-19.

<sup>40</sup>Baloyra, Enrique El Salvador in Transition, p. 29.

<sup>41</sup>Jung, p. 71.

The first two parties were both formed in 1960 out of intellectual discussion groups composed of professionals, students and teachers. The PDC derived their ideological basis from the Roman Catholic social doctrine, refuting both Marxist socialism and classic liberalism. Accurately predicting social inequities would eventually lead to violence, they called for a "revolution in liberty": a gradual evolution toward classical democracy and socio-economic justice. This would be accomplished by state economic planning to reduce unemployment through industrialization and increased productivity in all sectors. Their stand on land reform was fairly conservative, believing that private property is a basic right, except when used in a manner detrimental to society. Therefore, where necessary, land redistribution should be effectively planned for to optimize efficient use, and the owners justly compensated. Basically, the PDC's objectives were to develop a "large and comfortable middle class to provide the backbone of a stable economy and durable democracy....the solutions to El Salvador's problems did not lie in pulling down the oligarchy, but in elevating the oppressed."<sup>2</sup>

The MNR was a more "highly intellectualized democratic socialism whose adherents valued ideological purity over broad political appeal."<sup>3</sup> Led by Guillermo Ungo, whose father had been a founder of the PDC, their abstract program managed to gain a small cadre of urban labor in addition to the intellectuals. Both the MNR and UDN believed in much greater state intervention; both stood for evolution to socialism. The UDN appealed to laborers, students, teachers and activists, including some disenchanted military

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<sup>2</sup>Webre, Stephen. Jose Napoleon Duarte and the Christian Democratic Party in Salvadoran Politics 1960-1972. Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1979, pp. 53-63.

<sup>3</sup>ibid.

officers. In addition, this party served as the conduit for the illegal Communist Party's electoral involvement. Both the UDN and the MNR were unable to achieve real electoral success, except in coalition with the PDC, which they did from 1972-77 as the National Opposition Union (UNO). From their ranks, along with disillusioned PDC members, the FDR was formed.

#### IV. BARGAINING POWER

##### A. THEORETICAL ELEMENTS

The conflict in El Salvador has centered over the access to and control of governmental decision making. Specifically, social and economic policy and distribution of the rewards. The ability and degree to which a group can successfully incorporate their designs into a competitive system is a function of their bargaining power. Defined as "political power held and exercised bilaterally",<sup>44</sup> bargaining power is observable only in relation to and in competition with another's. It is a complex function derived from the interdependent qualities of inherent bargaining power, actual bargaining power and bargaining skill.<sup>45</sup>

Inherent bargaining power is the ability to influence an outcome based on one's own perceived values of gain or loss from choosing to either stand firm or concede. In other words, it is one's own conviction (inherent resolve) in executing a certain action, based on the assessed value of expected gains or losses, as compared to other alternatives. For example, the perceived possibility for victory, with its contingent costs, in going to war, relative to the losses that would be accepted by conceding to demands. This is the basis from which initial strategies are devised and employed.

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<sup>44</sup>Snyder, Glenn and Diesing, Paul, Conflict Among Nations. Princeton: Princeton University Press. p. 189.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., pp. 189-90.

Actual bargaining power results from the perceived inherent power of a competitor as compared to one's own. It is the resulting relative power perceived after assessing the determination (inherent resolve) of an opponent to make good on his threats or promises, taking into consideration one's own assessment of his perception of your resolve. The crucial ingredients here are to be able to determine the competitor's commitment to an interest, without overestimating, while at the same time, communicating the highest credible resolve on your part. This is where the function of bargaining skill comes in, which can be described as the ability to apply strategy and tactics in a manner that produces the most favorable outcome. Strategy may employ tactics ranging from accomodative - where a high value is placed on reaching an agreement and therefore, concessions are made - to coercive, resolute firmness and deception, with no interest in reaching a compromise agreement, total acceptance of demands is expected.

There are two other factors which can have a direct influence on bargaining power. One is internal to an interest group, and the other external. The first is employs the concept of the "whole bargainer"; the extent to which a group is able to project a unified, cohesive character. The preferred interests of an heterogenous group vary according to the internal power relationships between members, just as it does between groups. It has been said that "crisis bargaining is as much a struggle within as without."<sup>46</sup> Logically, a group that is unified in agreement on interests, values and strategies, will convey the greatest possible resolve, and therefore possess greater bargaining power than if it were diverse and uncoordinated.

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<sup>46</sup>ibid., p. 75.

The external influence on bargaining is in terms of the ability of a third party(s) to effect the outcome of a conflict by altering "the resolve of the main protagonists." For this effect to exist, there must be a significant sense of dependence on the part of the protagonists toward the external actor. Existence of alternate sources of external support weaken this dependence and, therefore, detract from the third party's effective influence.<sup>47</sup>

#### 1. Application to the Salvadoran Context

It has been said that, "in Central American politics, recognition of the capability to exercise power is the equivalent of 'legitimacy' in advanced democracy."<sup>48</sup> In El Salvador, the means for expressing power capabilities can be broadly categorized as the: control of means of violence (institutional or non-institutional); control of economic institutions; capacity to effectively organize and manipulate mass consent; and the ability to mobilize external support. Control of the political institution itself has been omitted because, it is the possession of one or more of the above that renders control and effective application of government resources. Through the demonstration of these capabilities, the participants have defined the political condition of the country as it has evolved.

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<sup>47</sup>Clough, Michael, "From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe", in Changing Realities in Southern Africa: Implications for American Policy. Berkeley, Institute of International Studies, University of California 1982, pp. 2-3.

<sup>48</sup>Anderson, Charles W. "Central American Political Parties: A Functional Approach.", Western Political Quarterly, XV (1962), pp. 125-39.



#### a. Control of Means of Violence

One theory holds that in Latin America, violence is accepted as an integral part of the political culture, perpetuated by non-political socialization structures (family, Church, and less formally organized institutions), and political traditions such as frequent display of violence and government revision and replacement.<sup>49</sup> Whether this theory applies directly to El Salvador would require an in-depth sociological study. It is evident from the historical perspective, however, that violence has always been a consistently used political tool.

Use of violence as the means for controlling the political situation was adopted during the anarchic period following independence. Armies were sent from Mexico in 1822, attempting to force Central America's inclusion into the newly formed Empire. Civil war between liberals and conservatives finally destroyed the United Provinces of Central America in 1840, but several more armed attempts at confederation necessitated a continual effort of self defense.<sup>50</sup> Internal politics were typified by personal conflicts between elite landowners. When order was established near the turn of the century, by cooperation amongst the elite in determining the government, the armies organized and financed by these individuals could then turn inward for internal security against an increasingly restless population. An internal "national" security force was established by 1895. The need for stability and continuity encouraged the growth and professionalization into what today is a complex military organization,

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<sup>49</sup>Kling, Merle; "Violence and Politics in Latin America", in Conflict and Violence in Latin American Politics, Moreno J., and Mitrani B., eds. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co. 1971.

<sup>50</sup>Langer, William; Encyclopedia of World History, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1972, p. 857.

consisting of the army, for national defense, two internal security forces, National Guard and National Police, and the Treasury police for intelligence and investigation for national policy enforcement.<sup>51</sup> Herein lies the institutional control of violence.

This network of armed forces successfully monopolized all control of violence until the last half of the twentieth century, (including and because of the crushing defeat of the abortive peasant revolt in 1932). Competition in the form of "psuedo" or non-institutional violence emerged with the birth of clandestine paramilitary organizations such as ORDEN, FALANGE, and the UGB. Their strategy is terrorism to intimidate specific target groups into silencing their dissent, and convincing others of the advisability of not bucking the system. Their tactics are publicized threats and viscious murders.

The final form of violence as political power is manifest by the insurgents now fighting the regime. Since the goal of this group of power seekers is the removal of institutional power capabilities now existing, violent confrontation is the only means. As such, they "fight fire with fire". Their tactics exist on two levels: terrorist attacks of government buildings, economic infrastructure, and officials; and, armed force attacks on government forces. The former is designed to create disorder, incite greater repressive reaction and discredit the regime. The latter is to cause the same effects within the military with the eventual result of weakening the will of soldiers and the civilian population caught in the middle.

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<sup>51</sup>McDonald, Ronald; "Civil Military Relations in Central America: The Dilemmas of Political Institutionalization", in Rift and Revolution: The Central American Imbroglia. Wirada, Howard, ed. American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research. Washington and London, 1984.

## b. Economic Institutions

In the general course of human nature, a power over a man's subsistence amounts to a power over his will.<sup>52</sup>

More than just possessing wealth, this form of power is achieved by controlling the means of production, source of government revenue and expenditures, and determinant of individual livelihood. The legend of the "fourteen families" and the "magic square of oligarchic domination" previously discussed, is the prime example of monopolization of all sources of economic power mentioned. Control of the means of production can provide wealth through maximization of profits, which in turn can be used to "buy" political power held by another interest. At the same time, it logically provides a form of suasion over those employed. This is especially true if an ample supply of alternate labor exists as a constant threat to workers, and effective restrictions on organizing labor interests are maintained.

Commanding an industry that provides the majority of government revenue would carry with it the consequent ability to influence policy decisions and political appointments. Such a condition would compel a mutually agreeable relationship to develop between government and the private interest, providing one was not able to totally coopt the power of the other.

## c. Mass Consent

The ability to generate a significant segment of the population into support, or at least acceptance of issues, actions and beliefs, is the ultimate socio-political power base. It is, in other words, the ability to

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<sup>52</sup>Alexander Hamilton, "The Federalist" (No. 79).

manipulate the will of the people. In one way or another, it is the object other power contenders seek to control, in either a positive or negative fashion. For example, economic influence can be used to motivate labor support through a system promising just rewards and advancements, or it can induce submissive acquiescence by effective threats to life and livelihood.

Electorally, mass consent is the essence of true democracy. Those who have the capacity and skill to aggregate mass consent through parties, interest groups and movements, are allowed entry to the political process by this display of power. Elections are its measure and confirmation.<sup>53</sup> This is the preferred method of the middle and enlightened lower classes in general. Mass consent is the power capability of the majority. Economic and Violence are minority capabilities.

#### d. International Support

Relative importance of this power source has only recently gained considerable strength in El Salvador, due to the increase in international political interdependence, and the heightened attention given to the country's situation. The effectiveness of this external intervention is a direct result of the vulnerability of the country's economic system. Total dependence on an export economy which entailed the absorption of subsistence farmlands and minimal industrial development for internal markets, results in a country with inadequate means for self-sufficiency. Disruption of the export system, whether by external sanctions or internal sabotage, leaves the state wide open for intervention.

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<sup>53</sup>Anderson, Charles W., "Toward a Theory of Latin American Politics", in Conflict and Violence in Latin American Politics, Moreno, J. and Mitrani B. eds.; New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1971.

International assistance is manifest in the form of direct material aid and moral, political support or diplomatic pressure. The most significant players in this area have been Cuba, with Soviet support, and the U.S., both having ideological ties and foreign policy interests in support of the opposing sides. Other countries, such as Mexico and France, have provided political support to the left in furtherance of the socio-political change they represent.

B. ANALYSIS OF RELATIVE BARGAINING POWERS WITHIN EL SALVADOR

1. Conservatives: Oligarchic Power

The basis of the conservative's strength lies in the control of economic institutions, achieved through oligopolistic control of the means of production and revenue as well as a virtual monopoly on technical expertise in state commercial and financial operations. From this foundation, manipulation of other forms of power was effected. This economic domination, as previously discussed, was successful in exploiting the rural working class by maintaining a situation where profound competition for employment coupled with repression of organization developed a subservient dependence of the worker to the landowner. Coupled with the peasants' traditional respect for patron authority, elites harnessed peasant loyalty and confined the outlet of frustration to intra-class expressions. This was manifest in ready access to peasant informers, security force recruits, and even political support.

The means of institutional violence were controlled by regulation of military salaries and the offer of special pecuniary and social rewards to responsive military men.

Peasants, which the armed forces are dependent upon for soldiers, were provided steady employment and protection from the network of security forces which they became a part of. This constitutes the basis from which the intelligence and paramilitary organizations have maintained their manpower supply. As Chele Medrano, the founder of ORDEN, has said; "peasants were given a card, gun and pay, and the promise of protection by the National Guard."<sup>54</sup>

Of even more importance is the oft mentioned alliance between the oligarchy and officer corps. As the military provides the only means for protecting the wealth and exclusionary system of the elite, payments to officers in terms of "outright gifts (cash, cars, houses), privileges (vacations, credit), and favors (uncollected loans)", became accepted as a "necessary business expense." Immunity from investigation and prosecution enticed some officers to diversify their endeavors into such illegal activities as smuggling, gambling and prostitution.<sup>55</sup> Knowledge of such affairs could easily provide another means of suasion. Within the military, fierce loyalties are instilled within each graduating class (tanda) from the military school. The alliances and coalitions within and amongst tandas serve to promote a common bond of fear to protect both the personal and corporate interests of the officers. One Slavadoran analyst suggests that a "vast network of corruption" exists in this system, and represents the true power today.<sup>56</sup> The bottom line is that the motivation of officers so involved

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<sup>54</sup>Miami Herald, 11 February, 1980.

<sup>55</sup>McDonald, Ronald H., "Civil-Military Relations in Central America: The Dilemmas of Political Institutionalization", in Rift and Revolution the Central American Imbroglío. Wiarda, Howard, ed. Washington and London: American Institute for Policy Research, 1984. pp. 129-166.

<sup>56</sup>Gomez, Leonel, "El Salvador: The Current Danger. American Myths"; Foreign Policy, No. 43, Summer 1981, pp. 71-78.

to resist political change thus becomes synergistically entwined with the interests of the economic elite.

In the more recent modernization period, the growth of social unrest and political mobilization of the population and decrease in leverage over the military, induced the more militant of the conservative faction to resort to increased non-institutional violence to suppress disorder. Paramilitary organizations were formed to terrorize peasants and protect elite interests in much the same fashion as the private armies of the early nineteenth century. These groups utilized the same active and reserve military and other personnel who shared the same interests of stability and linked to the motivations described above. With the exception of ORDEN, which originally was directly affiliated with the National Guard until outlawed in 1979, the "death squads" were outside the official control of the armed forces, and therefore more responsive to the particular desires of reactionary conservatives.<sup>57</sup>

Another tactic that has been effectively utilized in the past to promote the legitimacy of their actions is the use and massaging of ideological symbols. Maintenance of the status quo was projected as being essential to the security and viability of the nation itself. The economic and political system was portrayed as being grounded on principles of democratic free enterprise and the sanctity of private property rights. Threats to the existing order of things were anti-democratic and Communist inspired, and detrimental to the common good. Internal consumption became even more important with the introduction of greater political participation. Conversely, with growing political awareness came less acceptance of this tenet. It was also

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<sup>57</sup>Although independent of institutional forces, the actions of the death squads have been known to a large majority of officers. Ibid.

important for international consumption, in attempting to maintain or gain support of fraternal right wing Latin American governments and Western capitalist countries (most importantly the United States).

## 2. Revolutionaries: Armed Opposition

Faced with the formidable objective of the overthrow of a regime possessing the powers (government resources, and the legal legitimacy of a status quo government) and resolve of an entrenched status quo (determination of an advantaged group in power not to yield its status), the only means possible is through the use of violence. This is especially true in a political culture that accepts violence as a means for gaining political access, and is readily used by the parties in power. The strategy of the radical left is to erode the resolve of the military and population in general in their support of the regime, and to destroy the power base of the ruling clique. Terrorism and guerrilla warfare are the tactics employed to accomplish these ends. Attacks are made on infrastructures (power stations, farms, and transportation) to disrupt the economy and increase social discontent. Militarily, a war of attrition is conducted by ambushes, hit-and-run encounters. Direct force confrontations are attempted only with heavily favored odds. At the same time, propaganda is used to instill ideas of how discouraged soldiers can be free of their situation. Prisoners are treated well and released so they may relate their experience with the guerrillas.

In addition to military success, the guerrilla campaign is dependent on gaining significant and increasing popular support, without which they could not enlarge operations to develop a general insurrection. In the mid seventies, the rebels discovered that terrorist acts alone did not attract much support; the increase in harsh



repression usually fell on less radical dissidents, and the sabotage often effected the lower class workers more than the wealthy. Formation of coalitions with popular organizations provided the additional tactics of civil disobedience and increased the rebel base of popular support. Greater acceptance and respect for the cause was gained through the increased exposure of social injustices, the regime could be discredited further in this manner than through violence. The activities of the popular organizations served to awaken international attention to the situation as well. They were so effective as to be a major factor in precipitating the coup of 1979. Since the formation of the FDR in 1980, this combined political arm of the movement has been the vehicle for positive publicity, such as the appeal for a negotiated settlement. Unqualified support for the recognition of the FDR-FMLN as a power deserving of an equal seat at the negotiating table was secured from France, Mexico, and, not surprisingly, Nicaragua, Cuba and the Soviet Union. Internally, their most recent efforts have been directed at disruption and discrediting of the elections of 1982 and 1984. Any gain in legitimacy of the government is a direct loss to the insurrectionary goal.

### 3. Progressives: Power of the People.

Consisting primarily of the urban middle class, the power capability of the Progressives lies in their ability to mobilize mass support. As such, institutional controls of violence and economic functions are sought to increase the effectiveness of their capability. This can be seen in the programs of the political parties; civilian control of the military, nationalization of banks and exports, strengthening of a democratic system (individual rights and liberties as well as electoral democracy). Staging

demonstrations, protests and rallies which attract hundreds of thousands of supporters, demonstrates to the other power contenders that this group and their interests must be addressed.

The image of possessing popular, majority support is the most legitimizing factor in the eyes of most of the western world. Support from regional democratic governments would apply additional pressure on the regime to accept progressives into the political arena. Convincing the United States executive and legislative branches of the viable plurality of their party would constitute access to amounts of material and moral aid that in a country the size and proximity of El Salvador, has a decisive effect.

#### C. ANALYSIS OF RELATIVE POWER ADJUSTMENTS

Evolution of the relative bargaining strengths of the power contenders in El Salvador exhibits a marked trend from centralized, limited control to a diverse, multi-factioned contest. In general terms, the process went from one of an all powerful, exclusive faction influencing all others into accepting their values and interests by using coercive methods. Social dynamics caused a gradual increase in the resolve of other groups to insist on greater acceptance of their values.

The first shift entailed the sacrifice of political authority by the elite landowners, to the military. The oligarchy's need for hard-handed military suppression of society to maintain their grossly advantaged position, produced the partnership of mutual benefit.<sup>58</sup>

The growing professionalization of the military produced a faction interested in national concerns as much or more than personal. The push for modernization through

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<sup>58</sup>LeoGrande & Robbins, pp. 1084-88.

industrialization introduced further competition amongst power contenders in the form of a rival economic elite faction, the bourgeoisie. Although still united in their opposition to radical reform, the internal rift caused by differing economic priorities weakened the hold of oligarchic domination.

Along with modernization came the attendant social dynamics of urbanization and middle class growth. The urban labor and middle classes are more educated, politically aware, with more demanding expectations than what the ruling class had to deal with before. Rising social unrest led the regime to continue to apply coercive tactics to enforce its interests. Not having been given any reason to alter its perceptions of the lack of power within the lower classes due to minimal inherent resolve to stand up for them as a group. This was soon to change, though, with the formation and activism of the popular organizations.

The moderate avenue of change through the political system having been stymied in the elections of 1972 - 1977, served to heighten the expectations of the urban middle and lower classes. The sudden disappointment of 1972 caused an intense surge of relative deprivation, which was exacerbated by the subsequent elections. Thus, the motivation for the popular organizations was instilled. The size and intensity of the demonstrations, and the growing domestic and international pressures they produced, culminated in the Majors coup of 1979. Being faced with a display of inherent resolve greater than ever experienced before, the powers to be realized some action was necessary. Hardliners, of course, believed in the lessons of the Matanza, and felt any action other than one displaying powerful resolve would be exposing weakness and inviting increased radical activity. The growing military faction of younger officers with more progressive perceptions, managed to act first, with assistance from the U.S.

The next step in the process was the reduction of the economic power base of the conservatives by the increased application of violence by the radical left. The threat posed by this group was enough to cause massive amounts of capital to be pulled out of the country. Damage to revenue producing facilities complicated the situation further, and led to a plunging national economy. The gross domestic product dropped from a 4% rate of growth to a 9% decline from 1979 to 1980. A total of 139 companies were closed due to strikes and sabotage in the same period.<sup>59</sup> The vast majority of wealthy landowners left the country and attempted to protect their interests from abroad. A reassessment of perceptions by the military and less hardlined businessmen was induced; structural reform was necessary to gain social order and to prevent a total loss of their positions.

It was, therefore, only when the radicalized left showed its extreme commitment to its interests, and the pervasiveness of its support, was an opening made for moderate change. The military was still completely committed to preserving its institutional integrity, which required protecting the constitutional integrity of the state. This is why the first junta's expectations were premature, and their demands unable to be met. Their eventual resignation and alliance with the radical left was a necessary ingredient to strengthen both the left and the progressive factions. Addition of the disillusioned moderates to the revolutionary cause provided the legitimacy necessary to gain greater domestic and international support. Mexico and France granted recognition of the FDR-FMLN as a significant political force, urging negotiations receptive to their demands. The FDR utilized

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<sup>59</sup>Washington Post, 27 June, 1981.

this opportunity to seek increased support with the aim of weakening the Reagan Administration's policy of regime support.<sup>60</sup>

It was perceived that loss of what centrist support remained in the government would destroy what little legitimacy remained within the regime. If that were lost, "another Nicaragua" would have been likely. Duarte and the PDC represented the only hope for preventing all out civil war. They provided the facade of legitimacy needed to stem the flow to radicalism, and secure U.S. aid. The position of the PDC and Duarte was strengthened through perserverence and dedication to the consistent party goal of evolutionary reform. Support of the military was gained allowing reforms to continue and rightist coup attempts withstood. Free elections have been held and a democratically selected government is now in place. Control of political violence and observance of human rights have improved drastically: the level of violence in 1984 was less than half of 1983. Agrarian reform is continuing and acheiving greater success. Economic growth is increasing - a 1.5% growth was experienced in 1984.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup>New York Times, 29 August, 1981.

<sup>61</sup>Report on the Situation in El Salvador, Department of State, Washington DC, 1 December 1984 - 31 January 1985.

## V. CONCLUSION

The question remains; is there adequate bargaining space in the present situation to enable a negotiated settlement to be reached? Is there now a perception on the part of effective power contenders that a negotiated solution is better than continued conflict? The answer is yes.

The Salvadorian crisis has gone through a series of stages leading from the original asymmetrical conditions to the present more symmetrical state in which the hard line positions of the conservatives are balanced by the opposite revolutionary hard liners. The great majority of players fall in the mid spectrum, aware of the tremendous costs of continued conflict and the necessity for seeking resolution through limited concessions. Of vital significance in reaching this condition is the loss of relative bargaining power of the two extremes.

Conservative power has been decimated by the economic changes; nationalization of finance and export controls, and losses due to warfare and sabotage. U.S. aid has since replaced the agricultural monopoly of government revenue. The heightened intensity of the conflict and the tremendous international attention generated clarified the true values and interests being contested, and therefore invalidated the previously successful Communist scare tactics and defense of democratic freedoms. The results of the elections of 1984 and 1985 proved this point when d'Aubuisson was not only defeated, but his political association was considered a liability by prominent businessmen of the ARENA party.

A most vital factor also publicized by the recent elections, is the support of the military for the new political system. As voiced by defense ministers in three

consecutive elections, the military has shown itself committed to non-interference in and defense of the process and the outcome. Because of the conflict, the armed forces have altered their perceptions and clarified their interests. The failure of the historical strong arm tactics of repression not only failed to suppress dissent, but aided in promoting greater support for the opposition. Their commitment to the constitutional integrity of the nation and the preservation of the military institution still reign supreme, however, it is now through acceptance of a popular democratic system (as required to receive continued U.S. aid) which provides the best possible means for achieving their goals.

The revolutionaries reached their pinnacle of bargaining power when their fight for social justice gained domestic and international recognition as being legitimate and necessary. The wind was subsequently taken from their sails by the social reforms instituted by the government and the initiation of peace talks. Although for short from rectifying all social ills, the advances previously discussed addressed the very core of FDR demands. The exceptions of reconstitution of the military and immediate power sharing excluded, in light of their being directly opposed to the constitutional legitimacy of the armed forces and the new government. Harnessing human rights abuses, agrarian reform and truly free elections resulted in the Revolutionary Front resorting to rhetorical attempts at illegitimizing these progressive actions. Their uncompromising negotiating positions at AYAGUALO emptied their public pleas for peaceful resolution of any substance. One exception, though, is their distrust in re-entering the system peacefully, out of fear of physical retribution.

One can logically assume that the moderates of the FDR, with their demands either being met or in the process of

being met, would yield in their support of armed struggle if confidence in the maintenance of law and order were achieved. The true revolutionaries however, are committed to a much more encompassing goal of structural power alteration. Their program would be expected to be one of delaying tactics through negotiations with the hope of fermenting unrest and the re-emergence of government repression.

The answer to the question of whether conditions favor a negotiated settlement is, then, yes. A stalemate in the military confrontation and the reversal of power positions from the extremes to the less hard line centrists with the perception of the high value in a settlement has set the stage for peaceful resolution. As mentioned, the major obstacle is the lawlessness that still exists. Reform of the judicial system and restoration of the rule of law would result in cessation of civil war.

For a truly lasting solution to be accomplished, however, the political and economic systems attempting to be established must become institutionalized. Historically ingrained cultural perceptions of democracy and the role of violence must be overcome. Two possible directions can be envisioned. The first is that progress toward a just and participative political-social regime continues for such a time until it is accepted as the norm. The other would be, with the recovery of the national economy and rising world commodity prices, a resurgence of economic elite power would arise to subvert this process.

The only force capable of significantly assisting the progressive forces in El Salvador and insuring continued advancement is international support, in particular, the United States. The present dependence of the Salvadorian government on U.S. aid provides the unique opportunity for the effective institutionalization of freedom and justice in



El Salvador. Substantial loss of interest and increased apathy on the part of the United States during this limited time of opportunity would provide the potential for regression which would be detrimental to the national interests of El Salvador as well as to the interests of the entire region.

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